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ABSTRACT

The document analyzes Mao Tse-Tung's "Three Main Rules of Discipline" and "Eight Points For Attention" and presents, by way of comparison, the text of the "Code of Conduct" issued by the President of the United States for members of the armed forces during the Vietnam War. Mao's regulations were revised by the General Headquarters of the Chinese People's Liberation Army in 1947 as follows: obey orders in all your actions, do not take a single needle or piece of thread from masses, and turn in everything captured. The "Eight Points for Attention" were revised to include the following: (1) speak politely, (2) pay fairly for what you buy, (3) return everything you borrow, (4) pay for anything you damage, (5) do not hit or swear at people, (6) do not damage crops, (7) do not take liberties with women, and (8) do not abuse captives. The "Code of Conduct" for American soldiers, intended to inform them of behavior expected of them during war time, contains six statements: I am prepared to give my life in defense of my country; I will never surrender of my own free will; if captured, I will continue to resist; if I become a prisoner of war, I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners; when questioned, I will make no statements disloyal to my country; and I will never forget that I am an American fighting man. (Author/DB)

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Occasional Paper #77-3

AN ANALYSIS OF MAO TSE-TUNG'S THREE MAIN RULES OF DISCIPLINE AND EIGHT POINTS FOR ATTENTION

by

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PREFACE

Michael Massie, a secondary social studies teacher and a Vietnam veteran presents a brief analysis of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's "Three Main Rules of Discipline" and "Eights Points for Attention," which were set forth in 1928 and later revised in 1929 and 1947, for the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

This paper contains a complete copy of the up-to-date revisions of these two documents and the text of the "Code of Conduct" issued by the President of the United States for the Armed Forces of the United States.

A comparision of the instructions to the Chinese People's Liberation Army with those issued for the Armed Forces of the United States makes for some interesting reading.

Eli Seifman
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Stony Brook [illegible]

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The Three Main Rules of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention were laid down by Mao Tsetung, for the People's Liberation Army, during the years 1928, 1929, and 1947. There were two revisions after 1928. The original rules handed down by Mao in 1928, were as follows: (1) Obey orders in your actions, (2) Do not take anything from the workers and peasants, and (3) Turn in all things from local tryants. After 1929, Mao revised the rules and made the following changes, Rule 2 became, " Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses.". Rule 3 was changed to, " Turn in all money raised." The last revision made by Mao was in October 10, 1947. The current Three Main Rules of Discipline are as follows; (1) Obey orders in all your actions, (2) Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses, (3) Turn in everything captured. The first main rule is self explanatory. It simply means that a soldier must obey all orders from his superiors and follow them in his actions to the letter. The revision of Rule 2, can be explained in this fashion. During the Civil Wars with the K.M.T., (Koumingtang forces under the leadership of Chiang Kai Shek) it was a well known fact that the K.M.T. troops would rob grain and other foodstuffs from the peasants once they captured an area. Not only were grain and other supplies stolen from them without payment from the K.M.T. troops, but anything of value was also taken by them. Mao, hoped by creating these simple rules for the People's Liberation Army to follow he would gain the respect and admiration of the peasants and workers, and adherence to these rules would help make possible the much needed support, for the P.L.A. to carry on the war against the K.M.T. The third rule, and its revisions are centered around the same thoughts of Mao. Here Mao, laid down this rule in order that all arms and monies taken from the local supporters

of the K.M.T. would be turned in. Mao's purpose here was to show the peasants and workers that the People's Liberation Army was a " people's " army and was concerned about the welfare of the peasants and workers. His primary concern was to show the people through the actions of the People's Liberation Army, that this army was not like the greedy, selfish, brutal, and murderous forces of the Koumingtang.

The original Eight Points of Attention, started out as Six Points and were later revised in 1947. The Six Points of Attention in 1928, were as follows; (1) Put back the doors you have taken down for bed-boards; (2) Put back the straw you have used for bedding; (3) Speak politely; (4) Pay fairly for what you buy, (5) Return everything you borrow; and (6) Pay for anything you damage. Two more points were later added to the orginal six, they were, " Do not bathe within sight of women ", and " Do not search the pockets of captives." What must be kept in mind while reading the orginal points of attention is that Mao's forces consisted of peasants and workers, and were not professional soldiers. Mao's forces were participating in gueriila type operations, and they slept and ate when and where it was possible for them to do so. In the base areas, political work and productive labor was also part of the daily operations. When the soldiers were not fighting they were busy producing their own grain, or mending their weapons and clothes. Some time was also used to purchase foodstuffs that were unavailable to them from the local peasants. The political work was made up of pointing out to the peasants, within and around their base areas, which were generally in the mountain regions, the differences between the people's army and the Koumingtang. These peasant soldiers would relay to other peasants the reasons for their fight against the K.M.T. forces and why it was justified. Also, another point must be made clear while

looking over the orginal Points of Attention, we must keep in mind is that by showing the people that the P.L.A. respected the things they borrowed from the peasants, and even paid for any damages they made, was geared for winning over the peasants alligance. The K.M.T., on the other hand, had no regard for the peasants plight, and were known to destroy property and people wantonly. The K.M.T. and its actions against the peasants made it possible for the P.L.A. to win over many people to their cause, and continue the war against the Koumingtang for a period over twenty years. Winning over the people by showing them their concern for the peoples' well-being, helped the People's Liberation Army get recruits for their fight.

The Eight Points of Attention handed down by Mao for the People's Liberation Army in October 10, 1947 are somewhat the same, with the same general thoughts behind them which I have mentioned before. These Eight Points of Attention are as follows: (1) Speak politely; (2) Pay fairly for what you buy, (3) Return everything you borrow, (4) Pay for anything you damage, (5) Do not hit or swear at people, (6) Do not damage crops, (7) Do not take liberties with women, (8) Do not ill treat captives. The key to understanding these Points of Attention is that the People's Liberation Army was moving away from being a guerilla type organization, and moving towards positional type warfare, with positional type, or traditional type battle lines. When this move was made guerilla warfare became a supplementary means of combat, not the main method of warfare. The positional type warfare is the type whereas both combat forces have clear lines of battle, and was the second phase of the People's Liberation Army in order to beat their enemy, the Koumingtang forces. The People's Liberation Army already had done extensive damage to the K.M.T. armies, with the effective use

of guerilla warfare, and now they looked ahead to destroying the Koumingtang forces in the traditional manner. My point is that, since guerilla activity was no longer the main thrust of the P.L.A., Mao revised the Points of Attention to fit the People's Liberation Army in that stage of combat. Looking over them it would be correct to say that most of them are self-explanatory, and can be easily understood. They center around the factors that would lead the peasants to support the People's Liberation Army, and help destroy the K.M.T., forces. " Return everything you borrow, " is quite different from the attitude of the Koumingtang forces. Their apparent attitude was quite the opposite, it was to take anything or everything of value from the peasants, without paying for what they took. Again the Koumingtang forces were noted for plundering, raping, and stealing from the peasants at will. It was the common practice of the Koumingtang troops to behave as thieves and bandits. Murder was also used as a means of suppressing the people. Mao wanted to make certain the People's Liberation Army was not noted for those actions of the K.M.T., and that is the purpose behind the Points of Attention for the People's Liberation Army. The Eight Points of Attention are all common sense items, and must be looked at for the time they were given, and for what purposes. Discipline is important for any army and without it the worst in man's nature can show through. Mao, as a enlightened leader gave the People's Liberation Army rules they certainly could live with, and if followed would gain the people's support, admiration, and of course get the necessary recruits for the war with the K.M.T.

The official Three Main Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points for Attention are included on the following page. I have also included the Code of Conduct, given to the Armed Forces of the United States by the President of the United States of America.

THE THREE MAIN RULES OF DISCIPLINE AND EIGHT POINTS FOR ATTENTION- INSTRUCTION OF THE GENERAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY-

October 10, 1947

1. Our Army's Three Main Rules of Discipline and Eight points for Attention have been practised for many years, but their contents vary slightly in army units in different areas. They have now been unified and are hereby reissued. It is expected that this version will be taken as the standard one for thorough education in the army and strict enforcement. As to other matters needing attention, the high command of the armed forces in different areas may lay down additional points in accordance with specific conditions and order their enforcement.

2. The Three Main Rules of Discipline are as follows:

(1) Obey orders in all your actions.

(2) Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from masses.

(3) Turn in everything captured.

3. The Eight Points for Attention are as follows:

(1) Speak politely.

(2) Pay fairly for what you buy.

(3) Return everything you borrow.

(4) Pay for anything you damage.

(5) Do not hit or swear at people.

(6) Do not damage crops.

(7) Do not take liberties with women.

(8) Do not ill-treat captives.

CODE OF CONDUCT

" By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, and as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States. I hereby prescribe the Code of Conduct for members of the Armed Forces of the United States which is attached to this order and hereby made a part thereof ... "

-1-

I AM AN AMERICAN FIGHTING MAN. I SERVE IN THE FORCES WHICH GUARD MY COUNTRY AND OUR WAY OF LIFE. I AM PREPARED TO GIVE MY LIFE IN THEIR DEFENSE.

A member of the Armed Forces is always a fighting man. As such, it is his duty to oppose the enemies of the United States regardless of the circumstances in which he may find himself, whether in active participation in combat, or as a prisoner of war.

-2-

I WILL NEVER SURRENDER OF MY OWN FREE WILL. IF IN COMMAND I WILL NEVER SURRENDER MY MEN WHILE THEY STILL HAVE THE MEANS TO RESIST.

As an individual, a member of the Armed Forces may never voluntarily surrender himself. When isolated and he can no longer inflict casualities on the enemy, it is his duty to evade capture and rejoin the nearest friendly forces.

The responsibility and authority of a commander never extends to the surrender of his command to the enemy while it has power to resist or evade. When isolated, or cut off, or surrounded, a unit must continue to fight until relieved, or able to rejoin friendly forces, by breaking out or by evading the enemy.

(CONTINUED) 7

-3-

IF I AM CAPTURED I WILL CONTINUE TO RESIST BY ALL MEANS AVAILABLE. I WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ESCAPE AND AID OTHERS TO ESCAPE. I WILL ACCEPT NEITHER PAROLE NOR SPECIAL FAVORS FROM THE ENEMY.

The duty of a member of the Armed Forces to continue resistance by all means at his disposal is not lessened by the misfortune of capture. Article 82 of the Geneva Convention pertains and must be explained. He will escape if able to do so, and will assist others to escape. Parole agreements are promises given the captor by a prisoner of war upon his faith and honor, to fulfill stated conditions, such as not to bear arms or not to escape, in consideration of special privileges, usually release from captivity or lessened restraint. He will never sign or enter into a parole agreement.

-4-

IF I BECOME A PRISONER OF WAR, I WILL KEEP FAITH WITH MY FELLOW PRISONERS. I WILL GIVE NO INFORMATION OR TAKE PART IN ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT BE HARMFUL TO MY COMRADES. IF I AM SENIOR I WILL TAKE COMMAND. IF NOT I WILL OBEY THE LAWFUL ORDERS OF THOSE APPOINTED OVER ME AND WILL BACK THEM UP IN EVERY WAY.

Informing or any other action to the detriment of a fellow prisoner is despicable and expressly forbidden. Prisoners of war must avoid helping the enemy identify fellow prisoners who may have knowledge of particular value to the enemy, and may therefore be made to suffer coercive interrogation.

Strong leadership is essential to discipline. Without discipline

camp organization, resistance and even survival may be impossible Personal hygiene, camp sanitation, and care of sick and wounded are imperative. Officers and non-commissioned officers of the United States will continue to carry out their responsibilities and exercise their authority subsequent to capture. The senior line officer or noncommissioned officer within the prisoner of war camp or group of prisoners will assume command according to rank (or precedence) without regard to Service. This responsibility and accountability may not be evaded. If the senior officer or non-commissioned officer is incapacitated or unable to act for any reason, command will be assumed by the next senior. If the foregoing organization cannot be affected, an organization of elected representatives, as provided for in Articles 79-81 Geneva Convention Relative to Treatment of Prisoners of War, or a covert organization, or both, will be formed.

-5-

WHEN QUESTIONED, SHOULD I BECOME A PRISONER OF WAR, I AM BOUND TO GIVE ONLY NAME, RANK, SERVICE NUMBER, AND DATE OF BIRTH. I WILL EVADE ANSWERING FURTHER QUESTIONS TO THE UTMOST OF MY ABILITY. I WILL MAKE NO ORAL OR WRITTEN STATEMENTS DISLOYAL TO MY COUNTRY AND ITS ALLIES OR HARMFUL TO THEIR CAUSE.

When questioned, a prisoner of war is required by the Geneva Convention and permitted by this Code to disclose his name, rank, service number and date of birth. A prisoner of war may also communicate with the enemy regarding his individual health or welfare as a prisoner of war and, when appropriate on routine matters of camp administration. Oral or written confessions true or false, questionnaires, personal history statements, propaganda recordings

and broadcasts, appeals to other prisoners of war, signatures to peace or surrender appeals, self criticisms or any other oral or written communications on behalf of the enemy or critical or harmful to the United States, its allies, the Armed Forces or other prisoners are forbidden.

It is a violation of the Geneva Convention to place a prisoner of war under physical or mental torture or any other form of coercion to secure from him information of any kind. If, however, a prisoner is subjected to such treatment, he will endeavor to avoid by every means the disclosure of any information, or the making of any statement or the performance of any action harmful to the interests of the United States or its allies or which will provide aid or comfort to the enemy.

Under Communist Bloc reservations to the Geneva Convention, the signing of a confession or the making of a statement by a prisoner is likely to be used to convict him as a war criminal under the laws of his captors. This conviction has the effect of removing him from prisoner of war status and according to this Communist Bloc device denying him any protection under terms of the Geneva Convention and repatriation until a prison sentence is served.

-6-

I WILL NEVER FORGET THAT I AM AN AMERICAN FIGHTING MAN, RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS, AND DEDICATED TO THE PRINCIPLES WHICH MADE MY COUNTRY FREE. I WILL TRUST IN MY GOD AND IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

The provisions of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, whenever appropriate, continue to apply to members of the Armed Forces while prisoners of war. Upon repatriation, the conduct of prisoners

will be examined as to the circumstances of capture and through the period of detention with due regard for the rights of the individual and consideration for the conditions of captivity.

A member of the Armed Forces who becomes a prisoner of war has a continuing obligation to remain loyal to his country, his Service and his unit.

The life of a prisoner of war is hard. He must never give up hope. He must resist enemy indoctrination. Prisoners of war who stand firm and united against the enemy will aid one another in surviving this ordeal.

(AG461 (2 May 57)

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